

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12 and 16 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 7 and 16 are amended. Reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of the pending application in view of the following remarks are respectfully requested.

As an initial matter, Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the interview conducted with Applicant's U.S. representative on January 23, 2008. During the interview, Applicant's U.S. representative argued that the combined teachings of Kanno et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,583,566), Nishikori et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,627,584) and Uehara et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,034,888) fail to suggest the inventions recited in Applicant's independent claims 1, 7 and 16. The Examiner indicated that he was not persuaded by the arguments; however, he suggested that Applicant amend the independent claims to recite that the second frequency is higher than the first frequency in order to enable an image-signal processing unit to process a larger number of image-pixel signals when a patient-data-list display scene is displayed on the monitor. Applicant has adopted the Examiner's suggestion, and has amended claims 1, 7 and 16 accordingly.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-4, 6-10, 12 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kanno et al. in view of Nishikori et al. and Uehara et al.

Applicant's claim 1, as currently amended, recites an electronic endoscope system which includes, inter alia, a monitor, an image-signal processing unit, a scene-changing system that changes a scene displayed on the monitor between an endoscope-image display scene and a patient-data-list-display scene including character code data, and a timing controller. The timing controller outputs a first series of clock pulses having a first frequency when the endoscope-image-display scene is displayed on the monitor, and outputs a second series of clock pulses having a second frequency when the patient-data-list-display scene is displayed on the monitor.

The second frequency is higher than the first frequency in order to enable the image-signal processing unit to process a larger number of image-pixel signals when the patient-data-list display scene is displayed on the monitor.

Applicant's claim 7, as currently amended, recites an electronic endoscope system that displays an endoscope-image on a monitor and which includes, inter alia, a scene-changing system that changes a scene displayed on the monitor between a first display mode and a second display mode. The second display mode includes a patient-data-list-display scene including character code data. The electronic endoscope system also includes a selection system that selects individual patient data, a display-control system that displays the selected individual patient data together with the endoscope-image on the monitor when the scene on the monitor is changed from the second display mode, in which the patient-data-list-display scene is displayed on the monitor, to the first display mode by the scene-changing system, and a timing controller that provides clock pulses to the electronic endoscope system. The timing controller outputs a first series of clock pulses having a first frequency when an endoscope-image-display scene is displayed on the monitor, and outputs a second series of clock pulses having a second frequency when the patient-data-list-display scene is displayed on the monitor. The second frequency is higher than the first frequency in order to enable an image-signal processing unit to process a larger number of image-pixel signals when the patient-data-list-display scene is displayed on the monitor.

Applicant's claim 16, as currently amended, recites an image-signal processing unit which outputs endoscope-image-display signals and patient-data-list-display signals to a monitor and which includes, inter alia, a scene-changing system that controls the image-signal processing unit to change between outputting an endoscope-image display signal to the monitor, and

outputting a patient-data-list-display signal including character code data to the monitor, a processing system, and a timing controller. The timing controller outputs a first series of clock pulses having a first frequency when an endoscope-image display signal is outputted to the monitor, and outputs a second series of clock pulses having a second frequency when a patient-data-list display signal is outputted to the monitor. The second frequency is higher than the first frequency in order to enable the processing system to process a larger number of image-signal pixels when the patient-data-list-display signal is outputted to the monitor.

Kanno et al. discloses an image filing system 241 which includes a host computer 208 and a computer display 209. See, e.g., Figure 25 and col. 20, lines 41-50 of Kanno et al. The host computer 208 includes a hard disc apparatus 215. See, e.g., Figure 29 and col. 22, lines 25-37 of Kanno et al. Figure 30(a) of Kanno et al. illustrates the contents of a patient data list file which is stored in the hard disc apparatus 215. See Figure 30(a) and col. 22, lines 50-54 of Kanno et al.

Figure 32 of Kanno et al. illustrates a main menu which is displayed on the computer display 209. Figure 32 shows that menu options include, inter alia, image search and patient data management.

Applicant respectfully submits that Kanno's image filing system does not display a patient-data-list display scene on the computer display 209. Rather, Applicant submits that Figure 30(a) of Kanno et al. merely shows the contents of a patient data list file, and that there is no disclosure by Kanno et al. that such list is displayed on the computer display 209. In this regard, Applicant submits that Kanno et al. discloses that patient data is retrieved in the patient data management mode by an operator inputting a patient ID, rather than by selection from a patient data list. See, e.g., col. 25, lines 61-65 of Kanno et al. Thus, Applicant again submits

that Kanno et al. does not disclose a scene-changing system that changes a scene displayed on a monitor between an endoscope-image-display scene and a patient-data-list-display scene, as recited in Applicant's claim 1.

Applicant submits that Nishikori et al. also fails a scene-changing system that changes a scene displayed on a monitor between an endoscope-image-display scene and a patient-data-list-display scene. In this regard, Applicant submits that Nishikori et al. discloses an endoscope system 1 in which a list of ID numbers are displayed on a screen of an operation computer 3, and an endoscope image is displayed on a separate monitor 13. See, e.g., Figures 3 and 15A – 15J, and col. 7, lines 16-30, col. 10, lines 52-54 and col. 18, line 65 – col. 19, line 23 of Nishikori et al.

As another matter, in the Office Action, the Examiner acknowledges that Kanno et al. fails to disclose a timing controller that outputs a first series of clock pulses having a first frequency when an endoscope-image-display scene is displayed, and outputs a second series of clock pulses having a second frequency higher than the first frequency when the patient-data-list-display scene is displayed. However, the Examiner asserts that Uehara et al. teaches this feature. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Uehara et al. discloses an electronic endoscope apparatus in which a horizontal synchronizing signal is used as a trigger input signal to cause a monostable multivibrator to output a discriminating signal. See, e.g., col. 15, lines 15-29 of Uehara et al. Uehara et al. also discloses that a clock whose frequency is higher than that of the horizontal synchronizing signal is input to a counter. See, e.g., col. 15, lines 44-47.

Applicant respectfully submits that there is no suggestion in Uehara et al. that the clock having the higher frequency which is input to the counter is outputted when a patient-data-list-

display scene is displayed. Thus, Applicant submits that Uehara et al. fails to disclose or suggest outputting a first series of clock pulses having a first frequency when an endoscope-image-display scene is displayed, and outputting a second series of clock pulses having a second frequency higher than the first frequency when a patient-data-list-display scene is displayed, as recited in Applicant's claims 1, 7 and 16.

Furthermore, Applicant's claims 1, 7 and 16, as currently amended, recite that the second frequency is higher than the first frequency in order to enable the image-signal processing unit to process a larger number of image-pixel signals when the patient-data-list display scene is displayed on the monitor. Applicant respectfully submits that the applied prior art fails to suggest this feature of the invention as well.

In view of the above, Applicant submits that the combined teachings of Kanno et al, Nishikori et al., and Uehara et al. fails to disclose or suggest an electronic endoscope system which includes a scene-changing system that changes a scene displayed on the monitor between an endoscope-image display scene and a patient-data-list-display scene including character code data, and a timing controller that outputs a first series of clock pulses having a first frequency when the endoscope-image-display scene is displayed on a monitor, and outputs a second series of clock pulses having a second frequency when the patient-data-list-display scene is displayed on the monitor, where the second frequency is higher than the first frequency in order to enable an image-signal processing unit to process a larger number of image-pixel signals when the patient-data-list display scene is displayed on the monitor, as recited in Applicant's claim 1.

Applicant submits that the combined teachings of Kanno et al, Nishikori et al., and Uehara et al. also fails to disclose or suggest an electronic endoscope system which includes a display-control system that displays selected individual patient data together with an endoscope-

image on a monitor when a scene on the monitor is changed from a second display mode, in which a patient-data-list-display scene is displayed on the monitor, to a first display mode, and a timing controller that outputs a first series of clock pulses having a first frequency when an endoscope-image-display scene is displayed on the monitor, and outputs a second series of clock pulses having a second frequency when the patient-data-list-display scene is displayed on the monitor, where the second frequency is higher than the first frequency in order to enable an image-signal processing unit to process a larger number of image-pixel signals when the patient-data-list-display scene is displayed on the monitor, as recited in Applicant's claim 7.

Applicant further submits that the combined teachings of Kanno et al, Nishikori et al., and Uehara et al. also fails to disclose or suggest an image-signal processing unit which includes, a scene-changing system that controls the image-signal processing unit to change between outputting an endoscope-image display signal to a monitor, and outputting a patient-data-list-display signal including character code data to the monitor, and a timing controller which outputs a first series of clock pulses having a first frequency when an endoscope-image display signal is outputted to the monitor, and outputs a second series of clock pulses having a second frequency when a patient-data-list display signal is outputted to the monitor, where the second frequency is higher than the first frequency in order to enable a processing system to process a larger number of image-signal pixels when the patient-data-list-display signal is outputted to the monitor, as recited in Applicant's claim 16.

For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that the inventions recited in Applicant's claims 1, 7 and 16 are not obvious in view of Kanno et al, Nishikori et al., and Uehara et al., and

thus, respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection and allow claims 1, 7 and 16.

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2-4, 6, 8-10 and 12 are also in condition for allowance, in view of their dependency from claims 1 and 7.

Based on the above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION


Reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action, and allowance of the present application and all of the claims therein are respectfully requested and believed to be appropriate. Applicant has made a sincere effort to place the present invention in condition for allowance and believes that he has done so.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should an extension of time be necessary to maintain the pendency of this application, including any extensions of time required to place the application in condition for allowance by an Examiner's Amendment, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fee to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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